

MEDIA RELEASE

SciELO South Africa open access platform reaches wider audience

Thomson Reuters, leading source of intelligent information for businesses and professionals, has partnered with Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) to host the SciELO database on Web of Knowledge (WoK), the world's most powerful search and discovery platform.

The Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO)-South Africa for high-quality South African scholarly journals was recently fully implemented by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf), its first extension to Africa from the extensive existing base in South America and the Caribbean. The free-online platform is a major contributor to increased visibility world-wide of peer-reviewed journals from the 'global South'.

The Thomson Reuters (formerly ISI indexed)/SciELO partnership to include journal titles on the Web of Knowledge (WoK) portal will further enhance the visibility of South African journals, and will increase their 'impact factors' (the best-available measure of the notice taken by other scholars of all the articles in a particular journal.)

The WoK interface will allow the user to access the journal collection of the Web of Science and SciELO together, as well as individual collections. All the search, navigation and citation metrics functions for the collections will be available together or individually.

Updates will be on weekly basis, meaning that every new journal issue indexed in SciELO will be immediately indexed in WoK.

This partnership will help bring greater visibility and improved access to research from emerging economies, particularly Latin America, the Caribbean, South Africa, and developed Latin-language areas, including Spain and Portugal. Integrating the SciELO database into Web of Knowledge will enable researchers to review and analyse relevant regional content alongside top-tier international literature.

Publishing in scientific journals is a common and powerful means to disseminate new research findings. Visibility and credibility in the scientific world require publishing in journals that are included in global indexing databases. Most scientists in developing countries remain at the periphery of this critical communication process, exacerbating the low international recognition and impact of their accomplishments. For science to become maximally influential and productive across the globe, this needs to change. According to Emeritus Prof Wieland Gevers of the University of Cape Town and Member of ASSAf, as well as a key driver and supporter of open access publishing, optimising the visibility of South African and African research from developing countries depends largely on increasing the quality and quantity of local research work, and enhancing the visibility of the work through search engines and bibliometric tools. A presence on WoK, through SciELO-SA and the Thomson Reuters/SciELO partnership, is a major step in the right direction.

In total, 22 South African journals are already published through the SciELO platform; it is expected that between 100 and 200 journals will eventually be published on the South African part of the platform.

Inclusion of journal titles on the SciELO-SA platform is based mainly on recommendations made by the peer-review panels assembled by the Academy from a mix of local scholars and scientists. In the start-up phase, a few local journals already accepted by

the Thomson Reuters indexing system were included, to be peer-reviewed later as part of the platform's ongoing quality assurance system.

Currently, SciELO publishes about 40 000 new articles every year from over 900 open access journals from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, Portugal, South Africa, Spain and Venezuela. The addition of SciELO to *Web of Knowledge* will follow a similar model to that of the Chinese Science Citation Database, which has been hosted on *Web of Knowledge* since 2008. Both databases are part of the ongoing content expansion at Thomson Reuters, to spotlight regionally relevant scholarly literature and identify influential authors and research within rapidly developing research centers.

Thomson Reuters *Web of Knowledge* provides access to the world's largest citation databases, covering over 100 years of research in more than 24,000 of the highest impact journals from around the world, as well as thousands of academic conference proceedings and scholarly books.

About SciELO-SA

The Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO)-SA is South Africa's premier open-access (free to access and free to publish) searchable full-text journal database in service of the South African research community. The database covers a selected collection of peer-reviewed South African scholarly journals and forms an integral part of the SciELO Brazil project. SciELO SA is managed by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf), funded by the South African Department of Science and Technology and endorsed by the South African Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). South Africa joined the SciELO Programme in 2009.

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